

Message Text

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PAGE 01 GABORO 00616 071412Z

43

ACTION OPIC-06

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 ISO-00 EB-07 /020 W
----- 052195

R 061530Z MAY 75
FM AMEMBASSY GABORONE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6566
INFO USDOC WASHDC
AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG
AMEMBASSY MASERU
AMEMBASSY MBABANE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OTRA, BEXP, ENIV, BC (LEONARD, RICHARD G)

SUBJECT: VISIT OF RICHARD LEONARD, OPIC CONSULTANT

FOR OPIC FROM LEONARD

1. OPIC CONSULTANT RICHARD G. LEONARD MAINTAINED TIGHT SCHEDULE DURING HIS VISIT TO GABORONE MAY 1-6 TO DISCUSS U.S. INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN BOTSWANA. FOLLOWING ARE HIGHLIGHTS OF LEONARD'S DISCUSSIONS WITH A WIDE RANGE OF GOB OFFICIALS CONCERNED WITH DEVELOPMENT PLANNING.

2. GENERAL MOTORS NOMAD ASSEMBLY. LEONARD DISCUSSED THIS PROPOSAL WITH DIRECTOR OF BOTSWANA DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION RALPH STEPHENS. ALL GOB OFFICIALS HAVE EXPRESSED KEEN INTEREST IN THE GM PROPOSAL AND WILL ACTIVELY FOLLOW UP. PERMANENT SECRETARY MINISTRY OF WORKS AND COMMUNICATIONS ALSO EXPRESSED INTEREST IN GM DIESEL LOCOMOTIVES. LEONARD DISCUSSED POSSIBILITY MINISTER HASKINS VISITING GM PLANT IN PORT ELIZABETH AND LEFT NAMES OF APPROPRIATE PEOPLE TO BE APPROACHED

IN THIS CONNECTION. ((COMMENT: EMBASSY WILL MAKE EFFORT IN COOPERATION WITH CONGEN JOHANNESBURG TO OBTAIN NOMAD CAR TO EXHIBIT AT FORTHCOMING BOTSWANA NATIONAL TRADE FAIR JULY 24-26)).

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PAGE 02 GABORO 00616 071412Z

3. INCONTINENTAL HOTEL. THIS PROPOSAL BELIEVED TO REQUIRE

FURTHER MARKET RESEARCH. BDC MAY ASK OPIC TO FINANCE
FEASIBILITY STUDY.

4. BUILDING COMPONENTS. BDC CONFIRMED THAT H.H. ROBERTSON,
MAJOR PITTSBURGH MANUFACTURER OF BUILDING COMPONENTS, HAS
SECURED SITE FOR MANUFACTURE OF SUCH COMPONENTS IN GABORONE.
THE SUDDEN DEATH OF A ROBERSON S.A. REPRESENTATIVE FORCED
CONCELLATION OF LUNCHEON WITH LEONARD IN JOHANNESBURG. LEONARD
WILL ATTEMPT TO CONSULT WITH ROBERTSON MANAGEMENT ON MAY 7
REGARDING POSSIBLE OPIC PARTICIPATION IN BOTSWANA PROJECT.

5. FREUHAUF TRAILERS. LEONARD INFORMED BY FREUHAUF THAT
TRAILER AND TRUCK BODY ASSEMBLY NOW UNDER WAY AT JUKES CURTIS
TRANSPORT IN FRANCISTOWN, BOTSWANA.

6. CATTLE RANCHING. PARFET RANCHING OPERATION HAS BEEN DISCUSSED
AT LENGTH BY LEONARD AND EMBASSY WITH PERM SECS OF LOCAL
GOVERNMENT AND LANDS, AGRICULTURE, FINANCE AND DEVELOPMENT
PLANNING, AND COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY. IN THESE CONVERSATIONS,
LINKAGE BENEFITS TO BOTSWANA REPEATEDLY STRESSED. THE CONSENSUS
SEEMS TO BE THAT A FINAL DECISION ON A LEASE OF THE SCOPE
ENVISAGED BY PARFET WILL TAKE TIME. LEONARD WAS INFORMED BY
ONE MINISTRY THAT SUBSTANTIAL ACREAGE IN SOUTHERN AND EASTERN
BOTSWANA IS PRIVATELY OWNED AND IS AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE OR LEASE.
DEPUTY SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE HAMILTON SAID THAT PAPER ON RANCH-
ING PROJECT HAS BEEN PREPARED AND IS ON THE MINISTER'S DESK.
HOWEVER, HAMILTON SEEMED PESSIMISTIC ON PROSPECTS FOR FINAL
GOB APPROVAL.

7. SUA PAN PROJECT. PERMANENT SECRETARY FOR MINERAL RESOURCES
AND WATER AFFAIRS GAOLATHE REQUESTED LEONARD TO FOLLOW UP ON THE
SUA PAN BRINE DEPOSIT AND GULF RESOURCES, STAUFFER, FMC, ALLIED
CHEMICAL AND OTHERS HE MAY WISH TO INCLUDE. LEONARD GIVEN COPY
OF MINISTRY'S LETTER TO GULF RESOURCES. THIS POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT
HAS HIGH PRIORITY IN GOVERNMENT'S PLANS. THE MINISTRY IS
PREPARING A DETAILED PROSPECTUS WHICH THEY WILL SEND TO LEONARD.

8. TOURISM. PERM SEC COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY MANNATHOKO
STRESSED GOVERNMENT'S DESIRE TO PRESERVE BOTSWANA'S ABUNDANT
WILDLIFE AND TO BUILD UP QUALITY TOURIST POTENTIAL. MANNATHOKO
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PAGE 03 GABORO 00616 071412Z

REQUESTED LEONARD TO TRY TO INTEREST TRAVEL COMPANIES SUCH AS
LINDBLAD, WHO HAVE HOTEL AFFILIATES, IN BOTSWANA'S TOURIST
POTENTIAL.

9. NORTHERN ABATTOIR. SECOND ABATTOIR AND RELATED INDUSTRIES
SUCH AS TANNING ALSO DISCUSSED WITH USAID OFFICIALS AND BDC.
ABATTOIR APPEARS SOLID BUT TANNING SITUATION UNCLEAR. OTHER FOOD
PROCESSING PROJECTS BADLY NEEDED SUCH AS BAKERIES AND DAIRIES.

10. COCA COLA BOTTLING PLANT. COCA COLA S.A. MANAGING DIRECTOR TO MEET WITH LEONARD IN JOHANNESBURG MAY 7 WITH REGARD TO POSSIBLE BOTSWANA BOTTLING OPERATION.

11. CENTRAL BANK. PLANS FOR NEW CURRENCY AND CENTAL BANK WERE REVIEWED BY LEONARD WITH BANK GOVERNOR-DESIGNATE H.C.L. HERMANS, ESPECIALLY WITH REGARD TO POSSIBLE IMPACT ON INVESTMENT CLIMATE. HERMANSC CONFIDED TO LEONARD THAT ESTABLISHING CENTRAL BANK AND INTRODUCING NEW CURRENCY WAS COSTING MORE THAN ANTICIPATED. IT IS ANTICIPATED THAT THE CURRENCY WILL BE INTRODUCED BY SEPT. 1976.

12. LEONARD WISHES TO EXPRESS APPRECIATE TO EMBASSY FOR EXCELLENT COOPERATION OF AMBASSADOR AND STAFF IN ARCANGING PRODUCTIVE SCHEDULE AND FOR THEIR GRACIOUS HOSPITALITY.

13. EMBASSY COMMENT: WE VERY MUCH APPRECIATE OPIC FORESIGHTEDNESS IN OBTAINING CONSULTANT TO PROMOTE INVESTMENT IN BLS STATES. LEONARD VISIT CLEARLY DEMONSTRATES POTENTIAL FOR EXPANDING U.S. PRIVATE CAPITAL INVESTMENT IN BOTSWANA WHICH WE BELIEVE CAN MAKE A MAJOR CONTRIBUTION TO THE COUNTRY'S DEVELOPMENT. WE HOPE OPIC WILL FOLLOW UP THE VARIOUS PROPOSALS. EMBASSY WILL PROVIDE ALL POSSIBLE SUPPORT WITHIN THE LIMITS OF ITS STAFF RESOURCES.

DECONTROL UPON RECEIPT.

BOLEN

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